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A 'Soda' Kiln Just Added to Silvermine School of Art's Ceramics Department

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The Silvermine School of Art ceramics studio has added a soda kiln built by an internationally-known ceramicist, author, and teacher.

— *an announcement from* [Silvermine Arts Center](#)

The kiln had its first firing this week, and will make way for new workshops and courses in Silvermine's ceramics department.

The kiln is a significant enhancement for Silvermine's program; before its completion, the nearest soda kiln in a community art center was two hours away. Silvermine School of Art offers a wide variety of ceramics classes, and spring workshops and courses will begin in April.

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“We were delighted to have Bruce Dehnert as kiln builder,” said Anne Connell, Director of the Silvermine School of Art, and we are extremely grateful to the Silvermine students and faculty members whose generous donations, matched by Silvermine Arts Center, made the kiln project possible.”

Jon Puzzuoli, Silvermine head of ceramics, teacher, and board member, worked directly with Dehnert over a 3-year period.

“The dynamic and complex glaze effects that this Soda Kiln will give the pottery are unsurpassed,” Puzzuoli said. “The idea was in the ether when I first arrived in early 2015 and we started construction a few months later.”

Puzzuoli described the firing process:

“At 2300 degrees, rock salt and baking soda are introduced into the kiln. The sodium from the salt and baking soda turns into a vaporous cloud that flows through the kiln and reacts with the pots to coat each in a glaze.

“This often results in an array of colors and can achieve a rich glossy surface that resembles an orange peel.”

Kiln builder Bruce Dehnert is currently head of ceramics at Peters Valley School for Craft in Layton, New Jersey. Dehnert has also taught at UMass Dartmouth, Parsons School of Art, and Hunter College. He has held university appointments in Borneo and New Zealand.

He has built kilns for studios and individual studio potters in the United States, Canada, and China. His "Simon Leach Pottery Handbook" was published last year by Abrams Publishing in New York.

Dehnert’s work is in many collections including The Crocker Museum, the Dorsky Museum, The XFR STN Archive at the New Museum, the New Dowse Museum, the Shein-Joseph Museum of International Ceramics, The White House, and the Yixing Museum of Ceramic Art in China.

About Silvermine Arts Center

[Silvermine Arts Center](#) is one of the oldest artist communities in the United States. Its five-acre campus in New Canaan consists of a nationally known artist guild, an award-winning school of art offering classes for all ages, an arts and fine crafts shop, and a gallery offering over 20 contemporary and historic exhibitions annually.

Silvermine is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that also offers an outreach education program, Art Partners, and hosts lectures, film screenings, and special events.

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Silvermine Galleries are open six days a week from 12 noon to 5 p.m. and by appointment on Fridays. For more information, call (203) 966-9700 ext. 20 or visit [the website](#).